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LETTER DATED 17 OCTOBER 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you that violations of the Republic of Iraq's airspace by United States, British and French aircraft continued over the period 1 to 15 October 1996 and that those aircraft carried out reconnaissance and engaged in acts of provocation. The details are as set forth in the annex to this letter.

I request you to intercede with the countries in question in order to halt these acts, which threaten the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Iraq and constitute a gross violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law.

These actions continue to alarm the civilian population and to cause material damage to private and public property. The Republic of Iraq asserts its right to seek legitimate compensation for the damage being inflicted on the Iraqi people and the Republic of Iraq in consequence of these actions.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex, the list of violations of Iraqi airspace, circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Violations of Iraq's airspace over the period 1 to 15 October 1996 and the resultant damage

1. Northern region: 89 sorties were flown at speeds of 600 to 900 kilometres per hour and at altitudes of 6,000 to 9,000 metres, over the following Iraqi cities and towns: Mosul, Irbil, Dohuk, Tall Afar, Aqrah, Amadiyah, Zakho and Ayn Zalah.

2. Southern region: 701 sorties were flown at speeds of 600 to 900 kilometres per hour and at altitudes of 6,000 to 9,000 metres, over the following Iraqi cities and towns: Nasiriyah, Samawah, Amarah, Qurnah, Artawi, Chabaish, Jalibah, Salman, Shatrah, Lasaf, Najaf, Qal'at Salih, Ushbayjah, Janub Shaykh Sa'ad, Ali al-Sharqi, Diwaniyah, Busayyah, Suq al-Shuyukh and Qurnah.

3. On 10 occasions United States TR-1 reconnaissance aircraft flying at a speed of 600 kilometres per hour and at an altitude of 20,000 metres violated the Republic of Iraq's airspace in the southern region before leaving in the direction of Kuwait.

4. At 1328 hours on 1 October 1996 a United States formation dropped four heat flares over the city of Dohuk.

5. At 1425 hours on 14 October 1996 a United States formation consisting of two aircraft broke the sound barrier over the city of Basra.

6. At 0725 hours on 15 October 1996 a United States formation, flying at medium altitudes, broke the sound barrier over the city of Umm Qasr. The aircraft appeared from the direction of Kuwait and remained over Umm Qasr until 0730 hours.